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AUTHOR	Dauzat, Sam V.
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ABSTRACT

The study compared two adult education standards used to determine Louisiana student eligibility for taking the General Educational Development (GED) test. Of the initial 590 students, 516 remained as study participants. The traditional standard, Standard 1, required the student to earn 13.0 on the California Achievement Test (CAT) with no area score below 12.0. The alternative standard, Standard 2, required the student to earn a raw score of thirty-four or above on the American College Testing-Adult Performance Level Survey (ACT-APL Survey) with a minimum of 10.0 in each CAT subject area. Students were pretested on the CAT and ACT-APL. A control group received instruction in a traditional adult education program; the experimental group was taught through an APL-based program. The study compares the percentage of students initially qualifying for GED through Standards 1 and 2. Percentages of students initially qualifying who actually took and passed the GED were also compared. Of the initial Standard 1 recommendations, 89% passed the GED; of those recommended through Standard 2, 97% passed. Ninety percent of the persons who qualified for GED testing by alternative and not traditional criteria were able to pass the test. APL instruction and criteria allowed a higher percentage of students to remain in an adult education program and attain a high school equivalency diploma. (Author/CSS)

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ADULT PERFORMANCE LEVEL RESEARCH AND CURRICULUM DESIGN

Dr. Sam V. Dauzat
Director

Teacher Education
College of Education
Louisiana Tech University
Ruston, Louisiana

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Louisiana State Department of Education Representatives

Mr. J. Kelly Nix
State Superintendent of Education

Mr. George Bertrand
State Director of Adult Education

Mr. Robert Boyet
Assistant Director of Adult Education

Institute Host
Louisiana Tech University

Dr. F. J. Taylor, President
Louisiana Tech University

Dr. Virgil Orr, Vice-President
Academic Affairs

Dr. B. J. Collinsworth, Dean
College of Education

Project Staff

Mrs. Nerissa Bryant
Curriculum Specailist

Mrs. Theresa Cronan
Research Assistant

Mrs. Bonnie Collins
Secretary

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Dr. Sam V. Dauzat
Project Director
Professor of Education
Louisiana Tech University

ABSTRACT

Louisiana adult education supervisors, instructors, and students in the parishes of Beauregard, East Baton Rouge, Jefferson, and Lafayette were involved in the present research study. In the study, a comparison was made of two adult education standards used to determine a student's eligibility for taking the test of General Educational Development (GED) in Louisiana. Of the 590 students initially enrolled, 516 remained as participants in the study.

The traditional standard, Standard 1, required that the student earn a total battery score of 13.0 on the California Achievement Test (CAT) with no subject matter area score below 12.0. The alternative standard, Standard 2, required that the student earn a raw score of 34 or above on the American College Testing-Adult Performance Level Survey (ACT-APL Survey) and a minimum of 10.0 in each subject matter area on the CAT.

Students involved became part of either the control group or the experimental group. The control group received instruction in the traditional adult education program while the experimental group was taught through an APL-based program. The division of students into groups allowed a comparison to be made of the percentage of dropouts from each program. Students could be recommended for GED testing through either standard, regardless of group association.

The purpose of the study was to compare the percentage of students initially qualifying for GED through Standard 1 and Standard 2. Percentages of students initially qualifying who actually took the GED and passed were also compared. An examination of the attrition rate of students in the control group versus those in the experimental group was accomplished in the study.

Adults enrolled in both groups were administered a pre CAT and APL Survey. Students earning a minimum of 9.0 or above on the CAT were included in the study. The study involved the time period in the parish programs between September, 1977 and April, 1978. Instructors at each site recorded test scores and all pertinent data on record forms. Data were taken from the record forms and coded for computer analysis. The procedure means of the Statistical Analysis System (SAS) was employed to obtain descriptive statistics from the data.

Results from the analysis showed that 6 percent of the students initially recommended for GED testing qualified through Standard 1 and 83 percent qualified through Standard 2. The remaining 11 percent initially met requirements through both standards.

Of the initial recommendations made through Standard 1, 89 percent of those tested on the GED passed. Of those tested after initial recommendation through Standard 2, 97 percent passed the GED. One hundred percent of those tested after initial recommendation through both standards passed the GED. Of the two standards, the highest percentage of

initial recommendations came through Standard 2. This standard also produced the highest percentage of students passing of the initial recommendations.

Data were also summarized for those recommended for GED testing after instruction. The greatest percentage of recommendations after instruction came through the alternative criteria. These students would not have qualified for the GED through the traditional criteria, yet 90 percent of those tested passed.

Information on attrition rates revealed that 78 percent of the students in the control group remained in the program while 92 percent remained in the experimental group.

It was shown in the study that the APL instruction and alternative criteria allowed a large percentage of students to remain in an adult education program and attain a high school equivalency diploma when these students would not have been recommended for GED testing through the traditional program requirements.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

LIST OF TABLES iv

Chapter

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND 1

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM 3

DEFINITION OF TERMS 4

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE 7

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND PROCEDURES 12

THE SAMPLE 12

PROGRAM GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES. 12

TREATMENT OF DATA 14

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT SITES 14

4. PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA 17

MEAN INFORMATION ON PARTICIPANTS 17

CONSIDERATIONS 19

INITIAL RECOMMENDATIONS 19

INITIAL RECOMMENDATIONS BY GROUP 20

RECOMMENDATIONS FOLLOWING INSTRUCTION . . 22

RECOMMENDATIONS FOLLOWING INSTRUCTION GROUP ANALYSIS 23

TOTAL RECOMMENDATIONS 25

TOTAL RECOMMENDATIONS BY GROUP 26

RETENTION AND DROPOUT DATA 29

INDIVIDUAL SITE DATA 30

QUESTIONS 33

5. INTERPRETATIONS AND FINDINGS 35

6. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS 38

BIBLIOGRAPHY 40

APPENDIX 42

RECORD FORM 43

MEAN RETENTION AND DROPOUT DATA INDIVIDUAL SITES 44

GED RECOMMENDATIONS BY SITE 45

LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
I	APL AND TRADITIONAL ADULT EDUCATION GROUPS MEAN INFORMATION	18
II	INITIAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GED COMBINED GROUPS	20
III	INITIAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GED GROUP ANALYSIS	21
IV	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GED FOLLOWING INSTRUCTION COMBINED GROUPS	23
V	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GED FOLLOWING INSTRUCTION GROUP ANALYSIS	24
VI	TOTAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GED COMBINED GROUPS	26
VII	TOTAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GED GROUP ANALYSIS.	28
VIII	MEAN RETENTION AND DROPOUT DATA	29

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Through the original Louisiana Adult Performance Level Pilot Study, 1976-77, Louisiana became the first state to conduct a structured, comparative study of the traditional adult education program and the Adult Performance Level (APL)-based program. Research findings indicated a mean change in test score--California Achievement Test and Adult Performance Level Survey--which was greater for the experimental group taught through the APL method. Adult educators were encouraged to consider the potential benefits of the APL curriculum, if not as the basis of their programs, then as a supplement to them. Adult students scoring below ninth grade level on the initial California Achievement Test (CAT) were given preference for inclusion in the 1976-77 study. It was suggested that the study be expanded to include, in an alternative program, the General Educational Development (GED) adult student achieving above the 9.0 level on a standardized achievement test. (3.47)

The present research was based on the suggested expansion of the above-mentioned original pilot study. Data were collected for the Louisiana Adult Performance Level Research and Curriculum Design project, funded by the Louisiana State Department of Education, Bureau of Adult and Community Education. The design

was based on the "Guidelines for Proposed Research Study" (2) for the 1977-78 Louisiana Adult Performance Level research.

The pertinence and timeliness of the topic under consideration have proved it to be one deserving of attention. Several states have begun to examine and some have implemented alternative methods for an adult student to earn a high school diploma. Included in the realm of alternatives are methods of instruction and new standards of measuring student knowledge and ability. (2:1)

The original Louisiana APL study dealt primarily with testing the effectiveness of APL as a method of instruction. The present research attempts to examine the effects of implementing a new standard of measurement through which an adult student may qualify for GED testing in an attempt to receive a Louisiana high school equivalency diploma.

Presently in Louisiana, the traditional requirements for an adult student to qualify for GED testing demand that the student achieve a 13.0 overall grade placement on the CAT with no subject matter area (subtest) below 12.0. Of the states comprising Region VI of the U. S. Office of Education Adult Education Regions--Oklahoma, Arkansas, Texas, New Mexico, and Louisiana--Louisiana holds the highest achievement requirements for GED testing qualifications. (4:6)

A perrenial problem in adult education has been keeping participants in the program. Students who are attempting to meet the requirements such as those specified by Louisiana often become discouraged and discontinue the program. (4:6)

The results of a research study reported in 1974 to the Louisiana State Department of Education (4) determined that

the mean grade placement on the total battery of the CAT for sample senior level students in Louisiana secondary schools was 9.6. Mean subtest scores were 10.2 in language, 8.1 in math, and 10.3 in reading. The sample high school students were not achieving on the standardized achievement test at the same level expected of adult students as prerequisite to GED testing. The 1974 study suggested that a more realistic standard than the existing one might encourage the adult student to complete the requirements for the high school equivalency diploma. (4:6)

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The implementation of competency-based education in adult education instruction has logically stimulated the need for alternative means of assessing achievement. As basic skills have traditionally been measured by standardized achievement tests, those criteria have been used to assess performance of adult students following the traditional route to GED. It parallels that life-coping skills (those competencies necessary for an adult to function in today's society) have an alternate instrument of evaluation to provide the student with an appropriate channel toward the goal of receiving a high school equivalency diploma. One such proposed alternative standard requires that the adult student earn a raw score of 34 or above on the ACT-APL Survey and a minimum of 10 in each subject matter of the CAT. (2:1)

It was the intent of the present study to compare the percentage of students who are initially recommended to take the GED by the traditional qualification standard (Standard 1) and

the alternative standard (Standard 2). Standard 1 requires that the student earn a total battery score of 13.0 on the CAT with no subject matter area score below 12.0. Standard 2 requires that the student earn a raw score of 34 or above on the American College Testing-Adult Performance Level Survey (ACT-APL Survey) and a minimum of 10.0 in each subject matter area of the CAT. The percentage of students who pass GED on initial attempt was also compared by standards. In an attempt to compare attrition rate of students receiving instruction through the traditional program and the APL program, participants were enrolled either in the control group (traditional instruction) or the experimental group (APL-based instruction).

The above information may be stated as the following questions to be answered:

1. What percentage of adult students who initially qualify to take the GED were recommended through the traditional criteria (Standard 1)?

2. What percentage of students who initially qualify to take the GED were recommended through the APL criteria (Standard 2)?

3. What percentage of students who initially qualify for GED testing through either standard actually pass the GED test?

4. What is the attrition rate of the students in the control group versus those in the experimental group?

DEFINITION OF TERMS

For the purpose of the study, the following terms are defined:

1. GED. GED refers to the tests of General Educational Development. Satisfactory completion of the GED by a student

enrolled in an adult education class determines the student's eligibility for receiving a high school equivalency diploma. Specifically, the student must score a 35 or above on each of the five subtests with an overall average not below 35. (If any of the subtest scores fall below 35, the overall average must be at least 45 for satisfactory completion.) The subtests include writing skills, social studies, science, reading skills, and mathematics.

2. Standard 1. This term refers to the traditional criteria used in Louisiana to determine a student's eligibility for GED testing. This standard requires that the student earn a total battery score of 13.0 on the California Achievement Test (CAT) with no subject matter area score below 12.0. The subject matter area tests are language, mathematics, and reading.

3. Standard 2. Standard 2 refers to the alternative criteria for determining the student's eligibility for GED testing. It requires that the student earn a raw score of 34 or above on the ACT-APL Survey and a minimum of 10.0 in each subject matter area on the CAT. (A raw score of 34 is within the above average range on the ACT-APL Survey.) (2:3)

4. Recommended for GED. This phrase refers to the fact that a student was recommended, or qualified, to take the GED test by meeting the specified criteria. In the traditional sense, a student would be recommended (qualify) for GED testing through Standard 1.

5. ACT-APL Survey. The Adult Performance Level Survey is an instrument of the American College Testing Program designed for diagnosis and evaluation of those competencies necessary for an adult to function in today's society. (3:4) The competencies

were determined through an APL Project conducted through the University of Texas at Austin and include five general knowledge areas: health, government and law, community resources, occupational knowledge, and consumer economics.

6. Traditional Approach/Method. The traditional approach refers to individualized prescriptive instruction based on student need as determined by a standardized achievement test. Instruction is designed to improve the student's academic skills in language, mathematics, and reading through both group and individual instruction. (3:3)

7. Alternative Approach/Method. This term refers to a program of instruction based on student need as determined by the APL Survey. Lessons are related to the five general areas of knowledge stated above in definition five. The teaching of academic skills takes place incidentally. (3:3-4)

8. Control group. The control group refers to the group consisting of students participating in classes taught through the traditional adult education instructional method (traditional approach). (2:2)

9. Experimental group. The experimental group refers to the group consisting of students participating in classes taught through the APL teaching method (alternative approach). (2:2)

10. Site. Site refers to the location of the adult education program in the parishes participating in the research study. The four sites involved are Beauregard, East Baton Rouge, Jefferson, and Lafayette parishes.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

At the time of the 1976-77 Louisiana Adult Performance Level Pilot Study, several states had begun to implement the APL concept into their local adult education programs. Few studies had been conducted which could provide information on the effect of such instruction related to life competencies and no studies were being conducted to compare APL-based programs with traditional adult education classes. (3:2) It was the lack of comparative studies which revealed the need for a structured, comparative study of the traditional and APL programs.

In 1976-77, Louisiana became the first state to conduct such a study of the two programs in ten adult education program sites in the state. One hundred and thirty-six participants were included in the final statistical analysis. Each site operated both a control and experimental group. Adults enrolled in both groups were administered a pre CAT and the APL Survey. The control group participated in a traditional adult education program while the experimental group received instruction in competencies necessary for adult living today. Both groups were administered a post CAT and APL Survey at the conclusion of the study. Improvement was shown in both groups with the change in test score being greater for the experimental group. A t-test procedure of the Statistical Analysis System revealed at the .05 level of significance that the average change in test score

for the control group and the experimental group was significantly different. (3:45)

In a 1976 New England life skills pilot project, pre and post APL test data were provided although activities were primarily directed toward providing instruction. (5:13) Six learning centers in three states and the Adult Education Resource Center of Worcester State College were involved. The groups organized in each site received APL instruction and students were administered pre and post tests of the ACT-APL Survey. Significant changes at the .01 level in total APL scores were shown in seven of the nine groups in which results were analyzed. (5:13)

With the continuation of objective study and the implementation of APL instruction in several states, another need was evidenced. There existed a need for adequate assessment of those skills aquired by the student and therefore a need for determining what alternative criteria can provide the student with an effective means of reaching his goal.

States reported by Fischer (5) and Roth (9) as already having implemented alternative standards or criteria include New York, Illinois, Texas, Alabama, and Oregon. From the efforts of the states utilizing adult competency-based instruction has come the External High School Diploma. The External High School Diploma allows the adult student credit for learning gained through life experiences. Students are required to work from a home-based program (as opposed to a school-based program) for areas needing further study. Such a program is presently being modeled by New York State. (9:6) The uniqueness of the New York State program is that it is a performance assessment system. No instruction is provided and participants must demonstrate proficiency in a

required number of generalized competencies and individual competencies through task assignments. (5:14) One hunderd and fifty-four adults had received a high school diploma through the program as of late 1976. (5:14) In a one-year follow-up study of twenty-eight of those earning the diploma, 62 percent felt they had received job related rewards, 100 percent felt personal satisfaction, and 77 to 96 percent supported statements concerning their increased life coping abilities. The New York State High School Diploma Program, which issues the diplomas, is operated by the Regional Learning Services and has served as the model program for others desiring to establish such programs. (5:14)

Competency-based instruction has also provided a means for earning credits in an APL program in Illinois. In the second year of the Project Career Success in Illinois, six high school credits were awarded for satisfactory completion of APL study as demonstrated through performance on a set of tasks. (5:14)

Texas has modeled its External Diploma program on the New York project. The Texas programs are more closely associated with the Adult Basic Education (ABE) centers in order to allow students to supplement basic instruction with the life competencies they are lacking. (5:15) Many adults who have already earned a GED want to take the External Diploma in order to master the required competencies. (9:9)

Home-based diplomas are also offered in Alabama. At the time of Roth's research, Alabama offered home-based diplomas in ten of sixty-seven counties, including seventeen school systems. (9:9)

Oregon's adult education programs are administered by its

thirteen community colleges. The colleges plan to grant External Diplomas by 1978. (9:9)

In the states reported above, alternative criteria for earning a high school diploma have been employed. In some of the cases cited, students succeeding in ABE programs expressed a desire to meet alternative criteria in order to become competent in life-coping skills. The alternative criteria proposed in Louisiana incorporates new criteria from a traditional standardized test with life-coping (APL) criteria. The alternative APL standard is proposed in relation to GED testing.

Rankin (8) reports that the GED and APL take fundamentally different angles of approach toward the high school diploma, yet the two have some resemblances and similarities that often require related skills. A chart is used by the author to briefly describe some of the areas of overlap between the GED and APL.

Cervero (1) suggests that if the APL and GED approaches to instruction are not significantly different, then perhaps thought should be given to the rationale for offering APL instruction to ABE students as an alternative to the GED testing program. In Louisiana, APL criteria for GED recommendation is proposed not in place of GED but, along with new criteria from a traditional measuring instrument, as an alternative channel to GED testing for students not meeting traditional recommendation requirements.

New criteria have been proposed in Louisiana in an attempt to test the effectiveness of an alternative standard for GED recommendation in the state. The examination of Standard 2 as a means to recommendation and passing of GED may reveal information concerning the value of the APL criteria in relation to the traditional criteria. If the objective study of the APL method in

practice has merited a place in the adult education program, a specific APL-related recommendation standard for GED should also be studied as a direct route to GED testing. The testing of such a specific standard was not observed in the review of related literature.

Chapter 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND PROCEDURES

The present study was begun in an attempt to examine the results of implementing specific alternative criteria for GED recommendation in Louisiana. Other states have employed alternate criteria for earning a high school equivalency diploma yet none are so specifically related to ACT-APL Survey results combined with the already existing standardized test in use--CAT.

THE SAMPLE

Each parish in the state of Louisiana was issued an invitation by the State Department of Education, Bureau of Adult and Community Education, to participate in the original Louisiana APL study. Of the ten parishes participating, six were included in the final statistical analysis. From those parishes engaged in the original study, four parishes have continued their involvement in the 1977-78 Louisiana APL study. Parishes participating are Beauregard, East Baton Rouge, Jefferson, and Lafayette.

PROGRAM GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

Participating parishes received written guidelines from the project director prior to actual instructional time at each site. Procedures and/or guidelines were established and carried out for the areas described below.

Site Personnel

Instructors at each site were certified teachers with experience in adult education instruction. Those teaching in the experimental group were familiar with APL methods and materials.

Teaching Methods

Instruction for the control group involved the traditional adult education teaching method as defined in Chapter 1 Standardization of APL teaching methods for the experimental group was established with the use of Modules from the University of Texas at Austin and/or the APL Louisiana Tech Curriculum Guide. (2:2)

Instructional Time

Instructional time was set with a maximum of 190 to 200 hours per student. The time period involved in the parish programs was between September, 1977 and April, 1978. (2:i)

Grouping

The adult educators at each site were required to apprise potential eligible students of the two approaches, APL and traditional, and counsel them on the alternatives. Groups were divided in order to make them proportionate in terms of sex, race, socio-economic status, and age. (2:3)

Testing

Pretesting with the APL Survey and the CAT was accomplished during the first twelve hours of student attendance. The CAT was given first and in two testing sessions. The APL Survey was given on the third testing session. Students must have earned a minimum of 9.0 on the CAT for inclusion in the study. (2:3)

Posttesting with the APL Survey and the CAT was to be done during the last twelve hours of student attendance prior to program termination or at the completion of 190 to 200 hours of instructional time.

Records

Data on test scores, instructional hours, and all other pertinent information was recorded by instructors at each site using the Record Form. A copy of the form may be reviewed in the appendix. The form was supplied by Louisiana Tech.

Program Monitoring

The project director and staff members made periodic site visitations to review the progress of the study and to ensure that adherence to the research guidelines was being maintained.

TREATMENT OF DATA

Data were taken directly from the Record Forms and coded for computer analysis. The procedure means of the Statistical Analysis System (SAS) was used to obtain descriptive statistics from the data. The descriptive statistics will be summarized and represented in table form.

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT SITES

Brief information related to the individual sites is presented below.

Beauregard Parish

Adult education students in Beauregard Parish participated in the study at the Adult Learning Center in the parish. All instruction received by both groups was individually prescribed by instructors who were experienced, certified teachers. Participants could attend class any time the center was open. The only variable noted was that the traditional program contained more materials which could be used away from the center while the APL materials, teacher-developed packets, and University of Texas Modules were not available for use outside the classroom.

East Baton Rouge

The APL experimental class in East Baton Rouge Parish met at the Valley Park Adult Learning Center centrally located in Baton Rouge. The control group classes met at the Rosenwald Adult Learning Center in Baton Rouge. The center is located in North Baton Rouge which is primarily an industrial area. Instruction was available for the experimental group on an individual basis between the hours of 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. on Friday. The hours of instruction for the control group were the same as for the experimental group. Two certified teachers provided the primary instructional assistance for the APL group. Several paraprofessionals with experience in adult education assisted the teachers.

Jefferson Parish

The Jefferson Parish contol group and experimental group were located in two separate centers in the parish. The control group was located at the Kenner Adult Education Day Center, and the

experimental group was located at the Westbank Adult Education Day Center in Gretna. The parish is an extremely rapid growing, and generally affluent suburb of the City of New Orleans. Instructors at both centers were experienced adult educators. Instruction for the experimental group was both individualized and group, with more emphasis on individualized instruction. The control group received mainly group instruction. Classes for the experimental group were two and a half hours a day for five days a week.

Lafayette Parish

The Lafayette Parish Adult Education Program conducted classes for both groups in the study at the main Adult Education center in Lafayette. There were two sections of the APL class, one for the day class students and one for the night class students. Instruction was individualized and prescriptive. Those students at the main center who participated through the traditional program and students from two additional centers who were not informed of the alternative method, made up the control group.

Chapter 4

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Data reported from the four participating parishes have been compiled and are presented in order to provide information on the implementation of alternative criteria to GED qualification in Louisiana. Analysis of data is used in answering the questions stated in Chapter 1 and in interpreting the findings. Summary information from computer analysis is presented in Tables I-VIII.

MEAN INFORMATION ON PARTICIPANTS

Mean information in Table I summarizes the descriptive data on participants. Table I reveals that the average grade completed in the control group was 9.6 and 9.8 for the experimental. The average age was 24.8 and 23 for the control and experimental groups respectively. Both groups were largely white and female.

The average pre CAT scores showed little variance by observation between the two groups, indicating closely matched groups from the onset of the study. The same was true for the pre APL scores.

TABLE I

APL AND TRADITIONAL ADULT EDUCATION GROUPS
MEAN INFORMATION

	Control Group	Experimental Group	Overall
Initial Participants	191	399	590
Age	24.8	23	23.8
Grade Completed	9.6	9.8	9.7
Pre CAT 1	11.3	11.4	11.4
2	9.8	10.2	10.1
3	10.9	10.8	10.8
Pre CAT Total	10.7	10.9	10.8
Pre APL	31	32	32
Hours of Instruction	90	62	71.6

CONSIDERATIONS

In analyzing data on GED recommendations by standards it became evident that several students initially qualified for testing by meeting requirements for both Standard 1 and Standard 2 simultaneously. Because of this occurrence, additional information and interpretations on students who qualified for GED testing through both standards is presented. (These students are not tallied under either Standard 1 or Standard 2 but are counted once in the tables as qualifying under both.)

An additional consideration which arose concerns the percertage of students recommended for GED testing. A small number of students in both groups were recommended for testing through the various standards but were not tested at the time the study was concluded. Reasons cited by instructors include students not attending the testing sessions and time lapse in availability of testing due to specific site related difficulties. Therefore, tables II-VII provide percentage analyses for those recommended and those recommended who were actually tested then passed. Such breakdown was necessary to best represent the data.

INITIAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Table II summarizes information on initial recommendations for GED testing through Standard 1, Standard 2, and both standards from the experimental and control groups combined. Thirty-nine percent of the participants enrolled in the study from both groups who qualified to take the GED were initially recommended. Ninety-seven percent of those tested passed.

Recommendations by Standards

Of the initial recommendations, 6 percent were recommended through Standard 1, 83 percent were recommended through Standard 2, and 11 percent qualified for GED testing by initially meeting requirements of both Standard 1 and Standard 2. Of the total initially recommended by Standard 1, 89 percent of those tested passed. Of those recommended by Standard 2, 97 percent tested passed. Of those recommended through both standards, 100 percent tested passed.

TABLE II

INITIAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GED
COMBINED GROUPS

Standard	Percent Recommended	Percent Passing of Those Tested
1	6	89
2	83	97
Both	11	100
Total	39	97

INITIAL RECOMMENDATIONS BY GROUP

Initial recommendation information given by group is provided in Table III. Since no instruction had preceded the initial recommendations the group data may seem to be of little significance. However, it is presented in order to complement the group analysis information on recommendations made after instruction and the total recommendations made by group which will be examined later in the report.

TABLE III

INITIAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GED
GROUP ANALYSIS

	Control		Experimental	
Standard	Percent Recommended	Percent Passing Of Those Tested	Percent Recommended	Percent Passing Of Those Tested
1	22	89	--	--
2	43	100	100	97
Both	35	100	--	--
Total	43	98	37	97

Control Group

It can be seen that of those initially recommended through Standard 1, all were in the control group. In this group under Standard 1, 89 percent of those tested passed. Under Standard 2, 100 percent of those tested passed.

As a whole, 43 percent of the total control group recommended were initially recommended. Of those tested, 98 percent passed.

Experimental Group

Of those initially recommended in the experimental group, all were recommended through Standard 2. There were no recommendations under Standard 1. Although all initial recommendations for this group came through a single standard, 97 percent of those tested passed.

As a whole, 37 percent of the total experimental group recommended were initially recommended and 97 percent took the GED and passed.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOLLOWING INSTRUCTION

Although the thrust of the study was directed toward initial recommendations, it is of interest to observe recommendations made following instruction in the traditional and APL methods. This information is represented in Tables IV and V.

Combined Groups

The greatest percentage--76 percent--of recommendations made following instruction came through Standard 2, the alternative standard. This was followed by the 14 percent who qualified through both standards. Finally, 10 percent were recommended through Standard 1, the traditional standard. Ninety percent of those tested passed after recommendation through Standard 2.

Ninety-three percent of those tested passed after recommendation through both standards. Of those tested, ninety-two percent recommended by Standard 1 passed the GED.

As a whole, 61 percent of those recommended were recommended following instruction. Of those tested, 90 percent took the GED and passed.

TABLE IV

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GED FOLLOWING INSTRUCTION
COMBINED GROUPS

Standard	Percent Recommended	Percent Passing of Those Tested
1	10	92
2	76	90
Both	14	93
Total	61	90

RECOMMENDATIONS FOLLOWING INSTRUCTION
GROUP ANALYSIS

Table V presents data from group analysis following instruction.

Control Group

In the control group, the greatest percentage of those later recommended did so through both standards--52 percent. The next highest percentage came through Standard 1--39 percent, then Standard 2--9 percent. Of those qualifying and testing under both standards, 92 percent passed. In Standard 1, 92 percent passed, and in Standard 2, 100 percent passed.

TABLE V

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GED FOLLOWING INSTRUCTION
GROUP ANALYSIS

	Control		Experimental	
Standard	Percent Recommended	Percent Passing of Those Tested	Percent Recommended	Percent Passing of Those Tested
1	39	92	--	--
2	9	100	99	90
Both	52	92	1	100
Total	57	93	63	90

As a whole, 57 percent of the total recommended in the control group were later recommended. Ninety-three percent of those tested passed the GED.

Experimental Group

There were no later recommendations through Standard 1 in the experimental group. Ninety-nine percent of those later recommended in the experimental group qualified through Standard 2, and 1 percent through both standards. Of those later recommended through Standard 2 and tested, 90 percent passed. Under both standards, 100 percent passed.

As a whole, 63 percent of the experimental group recommended were recommended after instruction. Of those tested, 90 percent passed the GED.

TOTAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The total recommendations for GED are presented in Tables VI and VII. Table VI provides information on combined groups and Table VII gives group analysis.

Combined Groups

As a matter of interest, information is provided in Table VI on the total recommendations for GED through all standards. This includes both the initial recommendations and those made following instruction. Of the total recommendations made, 8 percent of the students qualified through Standard 1, 79 percent through Standard 2, and 13 percent through both standards. Ninety-one percent of those tested passed after recommendation through Standard 1. The same is true for 93 percent by Standard 2 and 95 percent by both standards.

Of the total percentage of students recommended through Standard 1, Standard 2, and both standards, 93 percent tested passed.

TABLE VI

TOTAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GED COMBINED GROUPS

Standard	Percent Recommended	Percent Passing of Those Tested
1	8	91
2	79	93
Both	13	95
Total	100	93

TOTAL RECOMMENDATIONS BY GROUP

Group analysis for total recommendations is presented in Table VII.

Control Group

In the control group, 31 percent of the total recommended for GED qualified through Standard 1 and 24 percent through Standard 2. The greatest percentage of total recommended came through both standards--45 percent.

Of those recommended and tested through Standard 1, 91 percent passed and for Standard 2, 95 percent passed. As a whole, 62 percent of the total control group were recommended and of these, 95 percent tested passed.

Experimental Group

It was interesting to note that of the total recommendations made from the experimental group, none were recommended through Standard 1. Ninety-nine percent of the total recommendations in the experimental group were made through Standard 2 and 1 percent through both standards. Of those recommended through Standard 2 and tested, 92 percent passed. For both standards, 100 percent passed.

TABLE VII

TOTAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GED
GROUP ANALYSIS

Standard	Control		Experimental	
	Percent Recommended	Percent Passing of those Tested	Percent Recommended	Percent Passing of Those Tested
1	31	91	--	--
2	24	100	99	92
Both	45	95	1	100
Total	62	95	81	92

RETENTION AND DROPOUT DATA

Question four stated in Chapter 1 concerns the attrition rate of students in the control group versus the experimental group. A review of Table VIII reveals that of the 590 students initially enrolled, 191 were in the control group and 399 were in the experimental group. In the control group, 78 percent remained in the program and 22 percent discontinued. In the experimental group, 92 percent remained and 8 percent discontinued. The overall attrition rate of students was 87 percent retained and 13 percent discontinued the program. Of the 590 participants in both groups, 74 discontinued.

Retention and dropout data for individual sites is provided in the appendix.

TABLE VIII

MEAN RETENTION AND DROPOUT DATA

	Total	Retained	Percent	Discontinued	Percent
Control Group	191	149	78	42	22
Experimental Group	399	367	92	32	8
Composite	590	516	87	74	13

INDIVIDUAL SITE DATA

Data on which the report is based resulted from the combined information from the individual sites. General discussion of data by individual sites is presented below. Specific information on individual sites is included in the appendix.

Beauregard Parish

Forty-six students enrolled in the traditionally instructed class in Beauregard Parish. Nine students discontinued the program. Fifty-one enrolled in the APL class and six discontinued.

The greatest percentage of initial recommendations from both the control and experimental group in Beauregard Parish came through the alternative standard. In the experimental group all of the recommendations, both initially and after instruction, came through Standard 2. After instruction in the control group, the percentages of recommendations came equally from Standard 1 and Standard 2. In all cases, a high percentage passed of those qualifying for testing through the alternative standard.

East Baton Rouge

Thirty students participated in the control group of East Baton Rouge Parish. Eleven discontinued the program. Eighty-two participants made up the experimental group and twelve dropped from the program.

No initial recommendations were made in the control group. Following instruction, all of those recommended in the control group qualified through the traditional criteria and all passed the GED.

In the experimental group, all of the recommendations, both initial and after instruction, came through the alternative standard. A high percentage of these passed the GED.

Jefferson Parish

Sixty-seven adult students originally participated in the control group in Jefferson Parish. Ten discontinued the program. Two hundred and seven students made up the experimental group and seven dropped from the program.

Although half of the initial recommendations in the control group were made through the alternative standard, none of the students were tested. Also, one-fourth of the students were initially recommended by both standards but none took the GED. The remaining fourth of the initial recommendations in the control group came through Standard 1 and all passed the GED.

Following instruction in the control group, the greatest percentage of recommendations came through both standards simultaneously and all passed the GED. The next greatest percentage qualifying came through the traditional criteria, then the alternative standard. In both cases, all students tested passed the GED.

In the experimental group, all of the initial recommendations came through Standard 2 and a high percentage passed the GED. Following instruction in the experimental group, no recommendations were made through Standard 1. The greatest percentage of recommendations came through Standard 2 which also produced a high percentage of GED passes. A small percentage qualified under both standards and all of those tested, passed the GED.

Lafayette Parish

Forty-eight students enrolled in the control group in Lafayette Parish. Twelve discontinued the program. Fifty-nine enrolled in the experimental group and seven discontinued.

The greatest percentage of initial recommendations made in the control group came through both standards simultaneously. All of those tested passed the GED. The next highest percentage came through Standard 2 and all of those tested passed the GED. All of the initial recommendations in the experimental group came through Standard 2. All of those tested under the alternative standard passed the GED.

Following instruction in the control group, no recommendations were made through Standard 2 alone, although the greatest percentage qualified under both standards with a large percentage of these passing the GED. Following instruction in the experimental group, no recommendations were made through Standard 1. A high percentage of students were recommended through Standard 2 with a large percentage passing the GED. A small percentage qualified under both standards and all of those tested passed.

QUESTIONS

Analysis of the compiled data presented in the first part of this chapter provides answers to the questions presented in Chapter 1 and restated here.

1. What percentage of adult students who initially qualify to take the GED were recommended through the traditional criteria (Standard 1)?

Six percent of the students initially recommended for GED qualified through Standard 1.

2. What percentage of students who initially qualify to take the GED were recommended through the APL criteria (Standard 2)?

Eighty-three percent of the students initially recommended for GED qualified through Standard 2.

Information on those qualifying through both standards brought about additional findings which should also be reviewed in answering the original questions of the research. Eleven percent of the students initially recommended for GED qualified through both standards.

3. What percentage of students who initially qualify for GED testing through either standard actually pass the GED?

Of the total initially recommended through Standard 1, 89 percent tested passed. Of those testing after recommendation through Standard 2, 97 percent passed the GED. One hundred percent of those testing after recommendation through both standards actually passed the GED.

4. What is the attrition rate for students in the control group versus those in the experimental group?

In the control group, 78 percent remained in the program and 22 percent discontinued. In the experimental group, 92 percent remained and 8 percent discontinued.

Chapter 5

INTERPRETATIONS AND FINDINGS

As a whole, the greatest percentage (83 percent) of students initially qualifying for GED were recommended through Standard 2, the alternative standard. This was followed by 11 percent who initially qualified through both standards. The remaining 6 percent of the total initially qualifying were recommended through the traditional criteria, Standard 1. Of the total recommendations made in the study, nearly 40 percent were made initially.

The highest percentage of students passing GED through the various standards was the 100 percent initally recommended, tested, and passing who qualified through both standards. This would not seem unusual since the students qualified through both the traditional and new requirements and entered the GED testing situation with "benefit" of both qualifications.

The next highest percentage passing of those tested after initial recommendation came through Standard 2--97 percent. Finally, the smallest percentage (89 percent) passing of those tested came through Standard 1, the traditional criteria.

It can be seen that not only did the highest percentage of initial recommendations come through Standard 2, but this standard also produced the highest percentage of students passing of those tested after initial recommendation.

The pattern was repeated when reviewing the follow-up information resulting from the study. The greatest percentage of recommendations after instruction also came through the alternative criteria. Of the total recommendations made in the study, the highest percentage came through this alternative standard.

Of particular significance is the group analyses which indicate the percentages recommended and passing by control and experimental group. The group breakdown of the students initially recommended revealed that all of the initial recommendations in the experimental group came through Standard 2 and 97 percent of those tested passed. None of these students would have been initially recommended for GED testing through the traditional criteria, yet 97 percent actually took the GED and passed after initial recommendation through the alternative standard.

Again, of those later recommended in the experimental group, none qualified through Standard 1 alone, though 1 percent did qualify through both standards. Yet 99 percent of the later recommendations in the experimental group came through Standard 2, and 90 percent of those tested passed the GED.

Aslo of importance is the greater percentage in the group receiving APL instruction who remained in the program. The dropout rate for this group was lower than that of the group receiving traditional instruction. The APL instruction not only tended to hold students in the program, but also enabled a large percentage of students to pass the GED, when these students would not have been considered for testing through the traditional standard. Since one of the problems in adult education has been that of

keeping students in the program, it seems that the APL method and standard offer a way for those students to continue in a program which will help them reach their goal effectively when these needs have not always been met in the traditional sense.

In effect, the offering of the alternative standard could provide the chance for an adequate education and a high school equivalency diploma for those students not already being reached effectively through traditional methods and qualification standards. The ramifications of an adequate education for the adult student in Louisiana ultimately extend to the broader reaches of the economic and social future of the state. As stated in the Public Affairs Research Council (PAR) report, "The Impact of Illiteracy in Louisiana," "The greatest impediment to the future well-being of Louisiana--economically and socially--is the substantial portion of its population who lack an adequate education." (7:1)

Chapter 6

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The research reported involved 516 adult education students from the Louisiana parishes of Beauregard, East Baton Rouge, Jefferson, and Lafayette. In the study, a comparison was made of two standards used to determine the adult education student's eligibility for taking the test of General Educational Development (GED) in Louisiana.

The traditional standard, Standard 1, required that the student earn a total battery score of 13.0 on the California Achievement Test (CAT) with no subject matter area score below 12.0. The alternate standard, Standard 2, required that the student earn a raw score of 34 or above on the American College Testing-Adult Performance Level Survey (ACT-APL Survey) and a minimum of 10.0 in each subject matter area on the CAT.

Students participating became part of either the control group or the experimental group and comparison of dropout rates for the two groups was accomplished. The control group received instruction in the traditional adult education program while the experimental group was taught through an APL-based program.

The study compared the percentage of students initially qualifying to take the GED based on Standard 1 and Standard 2. It was found that not only did the greatest percentage of initial recommendations for GED testing come through Standard 2, but this

standard also produced the highest percentage of students passing of those initially recommended through the two standards.

The greatest percentage of recommendations following instruction also came through the alternative criteria and produced a high percentage of students passing.

In observing results from traditional and experimental groups, it is seen that the dropout rate of students in the APL-instructed group was lower than that of the control group.

The APL instruction tended to hold students in the program at a greater rate than did the traditional instruction. The APL criteria enabled a large percentage of students to pass the GED when these students would not have been given consideration for testing by the traditional standard.

The alternative standard, which incorporates new criteria from the traditional measuring instrument with APL criteria, seems to offer a way for students to remain in a meaningful program which enables them to obtain a high school equivalency diploma when this goal has not always been reached effectively by traditional programs and standards.

In Louisiana, the implementation of the alternative standard in adult education programs could ultimately affect the substantial portion of the population who lack an adequate education.

It is hoped that the research presented has yielded results or suggestions which directly or indirectly allow the adult education student to effectively and competently achieve that necessary education.

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APPENDIX

RECORD FORM

Experimental___ Control___

RECORD FORM

Name	Age	Sex	Race	Highest grade completed	PRCAT	POCAT	CHCAT	PRAPL	POAPL	CHAPL	Total instructional hours*	Check if discontinued**	Check those recommended for GED	Check those passing GED	GED Scores 1	2	3	4	5	Overall GED

* For purposes of this study, testing hours are not to be included.

** Indicate reason for discontinuation on back of form.

MEAN RETENTION AND DROPOUT DATA
INDIVIDUAL SITES

	TOTAL	RETAINED	%	DISCOUNTINUED	%
Site 1 Beau	97	82	85	15	15
2 EBrg	112	89	79	23	21
3 Jeff	274	257	94	17	6
4 Lafa	107	88	82	19	18
Site 1 Control	46	37	80	9	20
Exper	51	45	88	6	12
Site 2 Control	30	19	63	11	37
Exper	82	70	85	12	15
Site 3 Control	67	57	85	10	15
Exper	207	200	96	7	4
Site 4 Control	48	36	75	12	25
Exper	59	52	88	7	12

GED RECOMMENDATIONS BY SITE

BEAUREGARD CONTROL

Standard	Initial		Following Instruction	
	Percent Recommended	Percent Passing of those Tested	Percent Recommended	Percent Passing of Those Tested
1	27	100	33	100
2	50	100	33	100
Both	23	100	33	75
Total	35	100	65	90
BEAUREGARD EXPERIMENTAL				
1	--	--	--	--
2	100	89	100	82
Both	--	--	--	--
Total	43	89	57	82

EAST BATON ROUGE CONTROL

Standard	Initial		Following Instruction	
	Percent Recommended	Percent Passing of Those Tested	Percent Recommended	Percent Passing of Those Tested
1	--	--	100	100
2	--	--	--	--
Both	--	--	--	--
Total	--	--	100	100

EAST BATON ROUGE EXPERIMENTAL

1	--	--	--	--
2	100	100	100	76
Both	--	--	--	--
Total	13	100	87	76

JEFFERSON CONTROL

Standard	Initial		Following Instruction	
	Percent Recommended	Percent Passing of Those Tested	Percent Recommended	Percent Passing of Those Tested
1	25	100	36	100
2	50	--	5	100
Both	25	--	59	100
Total	9	100	91	100

JEFFERSON EXPERIMENTAL

1	--	--	--	--
2	100	98	98	99
Both	--	--	2	100
Total	41	98	59	99

LAFAYETTE CONTROL

Standard	Initial		Following Instruction	
	Percent Recommended	Percent Passing of Those Tested	Percent Recommended	Percent Passing of Those Tested
1	16	75	45	80
2	36	100	--	--
Both	48	100	55	83
Total	69	95	31	82

LAFAYETTE EXPERIMENTAL

1	--	--	--	--
2	100	100	97	86
Both	--	--	3	100
Total	43	100	57	87